BENSHAM MANOR School

Intimate Care Policy

Last reviewed: September 2026

1. Introduction

Bensham Manor School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of students will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Bensham Manor School recognises that there is a need to treat all students with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. No student should ever be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

2. Our approach

The management of all students with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The student who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the student's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so and are fully aware of best practice. Staff are supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individuals taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

The student will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and ability. Staff will encourage each student to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the student responsibility for washing themselves.

Individual care plans are drawn up for particular students as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the student. Each student's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to their situation to determine how many staff might need to be present when a student requires intimate care. The number of adults stated on the individual's care plan and Statement of Special Educational Need is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the correct provision is always available.

Where intimate care is required the staff allocated to that class will work where possible on a rota basis to ensure over familiarity in a relationship does not occur, yet, regular staff are attending the student so they feel comfortable and cared for. Wherever possible staff only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle is waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, female staff supporting males, as no male staff are available. On all residential visits there is a mixture of male and female staff to ensure intimate care is provided by an individual of the same sex. Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the student's care plan. The needs and wishes of students and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

3. The Protection of Students

- Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to.
- All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc, s/he will immediately report concerns to the Safeguarding Team. If a student becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the student's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed

3.1 Students wearing pads

Bensham Manor School provides information for parents and carers of the policy and practice of dealing with students wearing pads in school. Class teachers and support staff will discuss care needs and timing issues with parents and carers at the start of each year and have frequent contact with parents and carers to discuss any changes in routine or care needs. This allows the school and the parent to be aware of all the issues surrounding this task right from the outset.

3.2 Changing facilities

Children who have long-term incontinence will use the specially adapted facilities in the School. The dignity and privacy of the child is of paramount concern.

3.3 Equipment Provision

Parents and Carers provide pads, disposal bags, wipes etc. Parents and Carers are made aware of any equipment they need to provide. Families need to send in the pads appropriate for the individual's needs and on occasion will also provide disposal bags and cleaning wipes. School is responsible for providing gloves, aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

3.4 Health and Safety

Staff always wear gloves when dealing with a student who is bleeding or soiled or when changing a soiled pad. Any soiled waste is placed in a yellow waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag is then placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin is emptied and is collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classed as clinical waste. All staff are aware of the school's Health and Safety policy.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of our students with special needs are actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who can't) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

3.5 Physical Contact

All staff who engage in the care and education of our students exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that the majority of staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with students this will be in response to the individual's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Staff are aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff can always justify their actions and accept that all physical contact may be open to scrutiny.

Students with special needs may and do require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned; justification in terms of the child's needs is consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Where touch is used with students to enhance their learning experience through sensory awareness and as a relaxation technique; colleagues discuss the work and write detailed plans so any deviation and the justification for it is documented and reported.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and leave staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact.

In such circumstances staff deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations. Where appropriate and a history of abuse is known; those adults working with an individual will be informed of the student's vulnerability and safeguarding strategies are followed.

3.6 Physical Intervention

- Bensham Manor recognised that at times a young person might become dysregulated to the degree that it becomes unsafe for the individual or the community as a whole. At these times it may be appropriate to physically contain and hold the individual to make a dangerous situation safe.
- Always a last resort
- Minimum amount of time
- Sensitively deployed with a sound rationale (trauma, autism)
- Dignity and safeguarding maintained
- Not for compliance

- Debrief always offered
- Maintain relationships
- Record and inform parents/carers
- See also the Behaviour Policy for further information.

3.7 Pupils in distress

There are occasions when students are distressed and need comfort and reassurance , which may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff always remain self-aware at all times and ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgements take account of the circumstances of a student's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the student needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond. At times it is more suitable to involve the student's relative and the appropriate adult will arrange for this to happen. In such instances staff will seek further advice, from their line manager or other appropriate person in School.

3.8 First Aid and intimate care

There are named staff in School who administer first aid and wherever possible another adult or student is present. The student's dignity is always considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required, another member of staff is always in the vicinity and made aware of the task being undertaken.

3.9 Out of school trips, clubs etc.

Employees take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of Bensham Manor staff is no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities are familiar with Bensham Manor School policy and all LA Guidance regarding out of school activities.

To ensure student safety, we recognise increased vigilance is required when monitoring behaviour on field trips, holidays etc. We believe it is important to exercise caution so that a student is not compromised and a member of staff cannot be subject to allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour. Wherever possible staff do not place themselves in a position where they are in a vehicle, house or other venue alone with a student. On any occasion where this is unavoidable, such as work experience, another member of staff is always aware of the situation and it will have been discussed prior to the event.

If staff come into contact with students whilst off duty, they behave as though in their professional role and do not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.